

Effect and Effectivity

*In the beginning was the deed!*¹

Goethe, Faust

Restrictions of effectivity can be deliberate² or emerge involuntarily from the repeated application of simple rules. As a result, complicated systems arise which constrict their own success.

Usually there are custom-made justifications for every impediment – at least there are explanations which seem to be plausible. Normally you may notice that pathological systems provide their own legitimization.³ So it is not astonishing that falling out of a 10th floor window causes no problem until reaching the bottom (Keynes).

Disinformation is the most efficient obstacle to effectivity. Even in this field assertions are being made claiming its usefulness.⁴ Apart from missing or wrong information, wrong appraisal is one of its obvious features: evaluations are based on irrelevant or

¹ »It is but a part of art that can be taught: the artist needs it all. Who knows it half, speaks much, and is always wrong: who knows it wholly, inclines to act, and speaks seldom or late. [...] Words are good, but they are not the best; the best is not to be explained by words. [] Whoever works with symbols only is a pedant, a hypocrite, or a bungler. There are many such, and they like to be together. Their babbling detains the scholar: their obstinate mediocrity vexes even the best. The instruction which the true artist gives opens the mind; for, where words fail, deeds speak.« (Goethe, Wilhelm Meister)

² Popper for instance suggested the construction of political systems which »minimize misrule«; but this may also minimize possibilities for good leadership.

³ These turn out to be all the more impressive, the longer a system exists: neither continuity nor designation can guarantee quality.

⁴ In this way organisational development can lead to advanced entanglement and further stabilization of a culture of ineffectiveness. In this context, power is understood as something that can prevent rather than making something possible, and intrigue or slander has actually taken control.

false goals. It's understandable that it's nearly impossible to reach appropriate solutions with an inappropriate perspective.⁵

Whether or not disinformation is in fact harmful depends on the interests of the parties involved. After all, misdirected valuation can produce great profits, up to the creation of entire industries of ineffectiveness.

Also pseudo problem solving is less likely to encounter resistance than perceptible changes: often solutions are preferred which only repress or postpone a problem.⁶

Without considering knowledge quality as real central problem of organisation, rationalization may at best be able to treat superficial symptoms (apart from hard measures, which jeopardize an organisation's existence).

Rationality itself is the starting point of a rationalization which doesn't lead to further inflation, or makes an organisation even more ineffective, or produces »only« loss of resources.

The right answer to complexity is not simplification up to becoming more stupid, but more intelligent organization.⁷

Grundlegende und weiterführende Quellen:

T. R. Glück: Das Letzte Tabu : Blinde Flecken, Passau: Antea

T. R. Glück: Blinde Flecken in der Unternehmensführung :

Desinformation und Wissensqualität, Passau: Antea

<http://www.knowledgequality.org>

<http://www.thought-parasites.net>

<http://www.das-letzte-tabu.de>

⁵ For a general treatment of varieties in problem solving see Glück, T. R.: Das Letzte Tabu, Passau: Antea

⁶ this explains the proliferation of fashions in the consulting industry.

⁷ Einstein recommended that everything should be made as simple as possible, but not simpler. It's better to reduce only *useless* complexity.